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words, Israel was as much of a racial "melting-pot" as many other nations have been. Dr. Smith, of course, knows this fact *per se*; but he makes no use of it as a background for his admirable exposition. The other Semitic peoples may have included primitive clans which also disliked cities and had a horror of great buildings; but no Semitic nation except Israel has sent down through the ages a collection of poetry and prose in which the primitive nomadic element is arrayed persistently over against the dark background of capitalistic civilization. If Dr. Smith will address himself to this phase of the subject, it can hardly be doubted that we shall have a still more valuable exposition of the social origin of Israelite poetry.

Religion as Life. By Henry Churchill King.
New York: Macmillan, 1913. Pp. 194.
\$1.00.

In this volume the president of Oberlin College gives an inspirational treatment of religion from the newer angles of approach. The question that chiefly concerns the soul in earnest pursuit of life, he says, is this: Am I willing to face the facts of life, or am I ignoring them—the great common, essential, human facts? And he points out that a faith essentially religious underlies all our reasoning, all work worth doing, all strenuous moral endeavor, and all earnest social service. The treatment of this theme is divided into six chapters: "The Choice of Life"; "The Method of Life"; "The Realities of Life"; "The Sources of Life"; "The Enemies of Life"; "The Essence of Life." Ministers will find much first-rate homiletical suggestion in Dr. King's book; and thoughtful persons who are consciously facing the underlying facts of life will get much instruction and stimulus from these pages.

The Church and the Labor Conflict. By Parley P. Womer. New York: Macmillan, 1913.
Pp. xii+302. \$1.50.

This is one of the sanest and best instructed books called forth by the great social awakening now sweeping through the churches. The author is a Congregational minister in St. Paul. He shows an insight into social and religious conditions which is out of the common; and he gives evidence of an acquaintance with economic and sociological research to which few clergymen can lay claim. To say this, however, is not to criticize the clergy, but merely to point out that most of the recent literature dealing with the social mission of the church reflects an impractical element in the traditional conception of religion; and as the author of the book before us frankly says, one criticism that must be passed upon nearly all of this literature is its lack of definiteness and its failure to grapple

satisfactorily with the particular and fundamental facts of our contemporary social and economic development.

The significance of Mr. Womer's book lies, not in any startling or novel thesis, calculated to enlighten the expert, but in its practical and sane grip on facts traditionally supposed to lie outside the domain of church and clergy, and in its adjustment of these facts with the claims of religion. The author's aim is to give concreteness to the current discussions of the social mission of the church. While the book is not an epoch-maker, it is a worthy and scholarly sign of the new epoch into which the church is now pressing. No minister or thoughtful layman who is looking for light on the social problem as related to religion can fail to receive much benefit from a careful study of its contents.

Our Own Religion in Ancient Persia. Being Lectures Delivered in Oxford Presenting the Zend Avesta as Collated with the pre-Christian Exilic Pharisaism, Advancing the Persian Question to the Foremost Position in our Biblical Research. By Lawrence Mills. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1913. Pp. xii+193.

Dr. Mills, professor of Zend philology in the University of Oxford, is one of the leading authorities on Persia's literature and religion. This book is a collection of somewhat heterogeneous materials some of which bear upon the question of the relation of Zoroastrianism to Judaism and Christianity. This is one of the moot questions in the field of biblical interpretation. For example, the Jews were under the political domination of Persia from 538 B.C. to 333 B.C. The Persians had a well-developed idea of immortality. Prior to 538 B.C. this idea did not appear among the Hebrews. In the later post-exilic age, the Jews took hold of the idea and made good use of it. Did they get it from the Persian religion? To this and other important points of contact, Dr. Mills calls attention in a forceful fashion. The book is suggestive and interesting, but too disjointed and fragmentary to be as intelligible as is desirable in a work intended for the general public.

The Country Church. The Decline of Its Influence and the Remedy. By Charles Otis Gill and Gifford Pinchot. New York: Macmillan, 1913. Pp. xii+222. \$1.25.

This treatise, published under the authority of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, is an important book. Its chief burden, from beginning to end, is the search for actual, tested *facts*. Is the country church growing in size and power, or declining? Is it